

## Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /138 W

----- 067844

R 230826Z MAR 74

FM USINT DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 232

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION GENEVA

USUN NEW YORK 017

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BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

KUWAIT PASS MUSCAT

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY

SUBJECT: ARAFAT ACTIVITIES IN DAMASCUS

1. BOTH BEIRUT AND DAMASCUS PRESS HAVE REPORTED PLO HEAD ARAFAT'S RECENT VISIT (MARCH 16-21) TO DAMASCUS WHERE HE CALLED ON VARIOUS HIGH-RANKING SYRIAN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT ASAD, MINISTER OF DEFENSE MUSTAFA TLAS, AND COMMANDER OF THE SYRIAN AIR FORCE, NAJI JAMIL. ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL RUMOR MILL, THE PRIMARY REASON FOR ARAFAT'S HAVING COME HERE WAS TO ASCERTAIN WHAT THE SYRIAN POSITION IS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE AS A PRELUDE TO PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE GENEVA TALKS. ACCORDING TO THE RUMORS, IMPLICIT IN ARAFAT'S VISIT IS EVENTUAL PLO ACCPETANCE OF THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE ON THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP. THE RUMORS CONTINUE THAT ARAFAT WAS GIVEN ENCOURAGEMENT BY THE SYRIANS.

2. COMMENT: WE CANNOT CONFIRM THESE RUMORS FROM HERE BUT THEY APPEAR TO CONTAIN A KERNEL OF TRUTH, GIVEN THE GENERALLY KNOWN POSITION OF THE SYRIAN-SUPPORTED SAIQA ORGANIZATION IN SUPPORT OF ARAFAT'S CURRENT EFFORT TO TAKE A MORE "MODERATE" POSITION ON THE MATTER OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PALESTINIAN CONTROL OVER ANY TERRITORY TO BE LIBERATED IN THE WAKE OF ANY ISRAELI WITHDRAWALS FROM THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.  
SCOTES

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEES, VISITS, MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS, GOVERNMENT IN EXILE, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 MAR 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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